IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 6160 of 2002

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgements? : NO

2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO

3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgement? : NO

4. Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder? : NO

5. Whether it is to be circulated to the concerned Magistrate/Magistrates,Judge/Judges,Tribunal/Tribunals? : NO

PRAHLAD GOVINDBHAI PATEL

Versus

POLICE COMMISSIONER

Appearance:

1. Special Civil Application No. 6160 of 2002

MR PRAVIN GONDALIYA for Petitioner No. 1

MR IM PANDYA AGP for Respondent No. 1-3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

Date of decision: 14/10/2002

ORAL JUDGEMENT

The present petition has been filed by the detenu challenging the detention order passed by the detaining authority. The detenu has been detained under the

provisions of Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1985 (hereinafter referred to as `the Act of 1985') by order dated 15/5/2002 passed by the Police Commissioner, Vadodara City and he has been declared as dangerous person.

2. It is a settled principle of law that in order to bring a person within the expression "dangerous person" as defined in clause (c) of section 2 of the Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1985 (for short `the Act of 1985'), there should be positive materials to indicate that such person is habitual of committing or attempting to commit or abetting the commission of offences which are punishable under Chapter XVI or XVII of Chapter V of the Arms Act and that single or isolated act falling under the said Chapters cannot be characterised as a habitual acts as envisaged in section 2(c) of the PASA Act. Further, besides a person being a dangerous person, his activities should also fall within the ambit of expression `public order'. A distinction has to be drawn between the `law and order' and `maintenance of public order'. A reference may be made of M.J.Shaikh V. M.M. Mehta, Commissioner of Police & Ors., reported in 1995 (2) GLR 1268.

3. I have heard learned advocate for the petitioner at length and learned AGP for the respondents. I have also perused the material on record. Learned advocate for the petitioner has stated that the last offence has been registered against the petitioner detenu on 18/3/2002 and the detaining authority has passed the impugned order of detention on 15/5/2002 and therefore, according to the learned advocate for the petitioner detenu, there is a delay of about two months in passing the order. Learned AGP has fairly admitted the same. In support of the arguments, learned advocate for the petitioner detenu has relied upon a judgment delivered by this Court reported in 1997(1) G.L.H. page 381 in the case of Elesh Nandubhai Patel Vs. Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad City and Ors. more particularly at para 21 which reads as under:

> "There appears to be some substance in the contention of the petitioner that these two unregistered cases have been referred only with a view to cover up the gap or to give life to a stale case. This unexplained delay makes a ground of detention not proximate, vitiating the order of detention itself. If I am to buttress my findings, I would say the reference may be made to the decision of the Supreme Court in

Anand Prakash V. State of U.P. reported in AIR 1990 SC 516 and Pradeep Nilkanth Vs. S. Ramamurthy reported in 1993(2) Suppl. SCC 61."

4. It appears that last offence registered against the petitioner has been registered on 18/3/2002 and order of detention was passed on 15/5/2002 and therefore, there is a delay of about two months in passing the order. No affidavit has been filed either by the detaining authority explaining satisfactorily the delay caused in passing the order of detention. Therefore, in view of the above judgment relied upon by the learned advocate for the petitioner, the order of detention is illegal and the same cannot be sustained. Learned advocate for the petitioner does not press any other points.

5. In view of the above, the petition is allowed. The order of detention dated 15/5/2002 passed against the detenu is hereby quashed and set aside. The detenu namely Prahlad Govindbhai Patel is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if not required in any other case. Rule is made absolute accordingly with no order as to costs. D.S. Permitted.

(R.P.DHOLAKIA,J.)

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